



Montgomery County Council

From the Office of Council President Valerie Ervin

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Councilmember Valerie Ervin to be Keynote Speaker at Black History Month Celebration

On Wednesday, Feb. 22, at Montgomery College in Silver Spring, Her Comments Will Focus on 'How to Stand up Straight in Politics as an African American Woman'

ROCKVILLE, Md., February 15, 2012—Montgomery County Councilmember Valerie Ervin will be the keynote speaker on Wednesday, Feb. 22, as Montgomery College's Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus celebrates Black History Month with an all-day forum on "Sister Citizen: Black Women in American History and Culture." The free event, starting at 10 a.m., will be held at the college's Cultural Arts Center at 7995 Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring. It is open to the public.

Councilmember Ervin, who is in her sixth year on the Council and who last year served as Council president, will speak on "How to stand up straight in politics as an African American woman." There will be a question-and-answer period following her address.

The event also will include appearances by well-known performing artist Michelle Nelson and poet Kateema Lee. DeRionne Pollard, president of Montgomery College, will deliver remarks via video.

"I am excited to be part of this event," said Councilmember Ervin, who chairs the Council's Education Committee and previously served on the Montgomery County Board of Education. "Although black women have made great strides in American politics, we still have a long way to go."

Councilmember Ervin was the first African American woman to serve on the County Council. She got her start in grassroots activism as a union organizer. In the October 2011 issue of *Washingtonian Magazine*, Councilmember Ervin was named one of "Washington's 100 Most Powerful Women."

"One of the most important lessons for young people to learn is how to lead their lives with integrity," said Councilmember Ervin.

That is one of the central themes of the book "Sister City Citizen," which will form the basis for Councilmember Ervin's comments to the forum.

"This forum will give us a chance to celebrate achievements while also serving as an inspiration to those who want to be the next generation of black students who will shape the direction of America," she said.

The event is co-sponsored by Montgomery College's Women's Studies program and its Black History Month Committee; the Cultural Arts Center; the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus' Office of the Provost; its Arts Humanities and Social Sciences Area; its Office of Student Life; the Paul Peck Institute for American Culture and Civic Engagement; and the college's Office of Equity and Diversity.

Parking is available in the West Campus Garage, located immediately behind the Cultural Arts Center. For maps and directions, visit the college's web site at <http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/maps>. For more information, contact Genevieve Carminati at 240-567-7446.

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